

and God and asked and obtained from Him forgiveness for the same? Or have we feelings in our hearts against our brothers or our sisters that should not exist there—feelings that are alien to the Spirit of God? If this is our condition then we are under condemnation.

Before we come here to partake of this bread and to drink of this cup, we should know that there is nothing in our hearts or conduct that will prevent us from eating and drinking without condemnation and without sin attaching to the act. If we are not in this condition, then we are not as we should be. It is the imperative duty of the officers of this Church, if they know that there is a man or a woman whose life is not what it should be, to forbid that person from eating of this bread or drinking of this cup, that they may not do it unworthily. If they do not take this course with their brethren and sisters who are in transgression, or who are not living as they should the sin of such individuals is likely to attach to them.

Read the words of the Savior upon this point—not only those in the Bible but in the Book of Mormon, and see how strongly this is enjoined by Him upon His apostles. Paul, in one of his epistles, alludes to the fact that perhaps the health or even the lives of the Saints in his day had suffered because they had eaten of the bread and drank of the cup unworthily. Our lives should be such that when we go away from this place, after partaking of this holy ordinance, we may be filled with the Spirit, refreshed, feeling that our souls are filled with the bread of life and that our spiritual strength is renewed.

But there is too much carelessness among us. In speaking thus I speak to myself as well as to you. We do not feel after our God with that earnestness and that faith which we should as Latter-day Saints. We become almost entirely absorbed with the affairs of life. We scarcely get time to sit down and read the word of God or ponder upon His promises. It is with difficulty that many of us get time to attend to our meetings and—shall I say it?—perhaps scarcely time to attend to our prayers. We arise in the morning and enter upon the duties of the day without bowing our knees in our secret places before God and calling upon Him for His blessings. Then when the day's labor is ended we are too weary, perhaps, to go to those secret places and call upon Him again, or even to attend to family prayers. According to my observation there is too much of this neglect among us, and while such is the case we cannot have the blessing of God resting upon us with the power it should.

Perhaps again, there are some among us who indulge in intoxicating drinks and do other things which are entirely unworthy of the name of a Saint. We cannot expect God to bless us as a people if we do all this. There is only one course for us to take, and that is to keep the commandments of God with the greatest strictness, to live

near unto him every day and never leave our chamber until, as it were, we are baptized in the Spirit of God—with the power of God and His Holy Spirit resting upon us almost to the consuming of our flesh. This should be the case with us every morning every day and every night; we should not neglect these things, for if we do we cannot love the religion which God has given unto us, we cannot receive the power; we cannot partake of the gifts, and we cannot please our Father in heaven.

Then the family should be called together and time taken to pray unto the Lord—not merely with our lips: "Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth and with their lips do honor me.

* * * Therefore I will proceed to do a marvelous work, a marvelous work and a wonder." What is the reason, why has the Lord commenced His work of the last days? Because there was so much hypocrisy in the world. Men honor the Lord with their lips but not with their hearts, and the power of God has disappeared from among them, until it is very common now to doubt the existence of God, and to have no faith in the atoning blood of Jesus or the necessity for His atonement.

If we draw near unto the Lord with our lips and our hearts are far from Him, then we are hypocrites. If we profess to be Latter-day Saints and have an outward semblance of religion, while in reality our lives do not correspond with our professions, then we are hypocrites—we are guilty of hypocrisy before the Lord, and His anger will be kindled against us. There is only one way for us where we are so situated. We have the greatest promises held out to us of any people that ever lived; we shall receive their fulfillment if we are faithful. But woe unto us Latter-day Saints if after these promises and blessings have been sealed upon us we do not so live as to be worthy of them. Woe unto us if we fall by the wayside through carelessness, through indifference, through neglect, through the commission of sin, until the Spirit of God is grieved and departs from us, and we are left to ourselves to wander and to grope in the dark, knowing not the true path. Woe unto us if we get into that condition; then we shall be far worse off than if we had never heard the Gospel of the Son of God; far worse off than those who have died in ignorance and never heard the name of Jesus, never heard the Gospel of salvation.

We live in a day when we cannot trifle with God. He has said that His Spirit shall not always strive with man; He will withdraw that Spirit from us if we do not follow out His commands, and we shall be left to ourselves. The most dreadful condition that I can imagine a human being to be in is this—for a man who has once tasted of the word of God, who has felt its power, who has had a foretaste of the powers of the world to come, and who has rejoiced in those blessings, to suffer the Spirit of God to depart from him

through his own acts. Whenever I have thought of it concerning myself I have been filled with inexpressible horror. It has seemed as though a thousand deaths would be preferable; for to die is an easy thing; it is a light matter compared with apostacy—the loss of the Spirit of God, the forfeiting of the favor of heaven, the loss of those blessings, promises, and powers which God has bestowed, the loss of interest in the work of God; to have the Spirit fade and withdraw itself from us until we live without it. Can you imagine any worse condition?

Let him, the Apostle says, that standeth take heed lest he fall. There is no one so strong that he can be sure he will get through. It is only by the grace of God that we can expect to be faithful and to receive salvation. Think of the mighty men who have been in this Church who have fallen. Think of Oliver Cowdery who received the revelations of God as Joseph did, upon whose head John the Baptist laid his hands and conferred in common with Joseph the Aaronic Priesthood, and who afterwards received, by the administration of the three Apostles the apostleship which God had withdrawn, but was then restored to the inhabitants of the earth. Think of this man unto whom the Savior showed Himself as He did to the Prophet Joseph and to whom the Prophet Elijah and other prophets ministered. Think of this man who received these great manifestations and upon whom God bestowed this great power—think of this man falling away from the Church and contending against the Prophet of God. He did not deny his testimony, but he withdrew from the Church of God, and his example was not what it should have been.

If such a man as this could fall—if such a man as Sidney Rigdon, who with Joseph beheld that glorious vision recorded in the seventy-sixth section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants—one of the grandest visions that ever human eyes beheld, the grandest revelation that ever human pen wrote at the inspiration of the Almighty—if Sidney Rigdon with all his knowledge, with all that he received from God and the blessings that were bestowed upon him, could not stand, or did not stand, with the wealth of knowledge that God gave unto him—the heavens being opened to his view—if he fell what shall we say? Can we expect to stand unless we keep the commandments of God and are faithful to the truth? No, brethren and sisters. There is only one way in which we can expect to do that which is right and to receive the glory of God, that is to hold out faithfully to the end, to walk humbly before our God, to walk prayerfully and circumspectly before Him, and keep His commandments with all diligence, with all thankfulness day by day, hour by hour, seeking unto Him for strength, conscious of our own unworthiness, of our destitution in His holy sight, in the presence of His